



Montana Office of Public Instruction  
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[www.opi.mt.gov/IndianEd](http://www.opi.mt.gov/IndianEd)

# Model Lesson Plan

## Social Studies Grades 7/8

### Topic 17 – Federal Indian Policy: American Indian Boarding Schools

#### Stage 1 Desired Results

#### Established Goals:

Investigate, interpret, and analyze American Indian historical viewpoints concerning major events.  
(SS4:B8.6)

#### Understandings:

History is a story most often related through the subjective experience of the teller. With the inclusion of more and varied voices, histories are being rediscovered and revised. (EU 6)

Establish an understanding of Indian boarding schools from 1870 to present day.

Compare and contrast the differences in the structure of education that was established for Indian children of the United States.

#### Essential Questions:

Why did the U.S. Government establish Indian boarding schools in the United States?

Who ran and funded these schools?

How were the boarding schools different from other schools in the United States?

How did the boarding schools impact the lives and cultures of Indian families?

Are Indian boarding schools still here today and what has changed about them?

#### *Students will be able to...*

Discuss the stages of the development of Indian boarding schools in the United States and specifically Montana.

Recognize key people and organizations.

Express their findings in oral presentations and journals.

#### *Students will know...*

Indian boarding schools were established in the United States and Montana Indian children attended these schools.

That Indian boarding schools still exist and there are Day and Boarding schools in Montana.

## Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

### Performance Tasks:

Create a timeline of Indian boarding schools from 1870-present (highlight specific events).

Students will read information pertaining to Indian boarding schools.

Students will conduct research projects (timeline, journaling, research presentations).

Review terminology and key people throughout history.



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### Stage 3 Learning Plan

#### Learning Activities:

**W** = Students will be engaged in conversation on the development of Indian boarding schools from 1870 to present.

**H** = Engaging with literature and primary source documents regarding the boarding school experience.

**E** = Students will be engaged in conversation and journaling activities on the development of Indian boarding schools.

**R** = Students will review terminology and timeline as a whole group and be able to relate this to events in history.

**E** = Students will be reading and researching information on the development of Indian boarding schools and report these findings out to their peers

**T** = Students will be working in small groups on a research project and will write up a brief report and give a presentation on the information learned.

**O** = Share and display project.

Introduce the topic by asking students how they would feel if aliens came down to earth and took all the children away to be reeducated and shaped and molded in their beliefs. Students would be forbidden to speak the language they already know and would have to learn to communicate like the aliens. Lead a brief class discussion. Share with students that something similar happened to American Indians all across the United States.

Show the clip of the film, Montana Mosaic, produced by the Montana Historical Society (a copy should be in your library, included is a link to an on-line streaming video version). Watch the segment titled Dislocation/Relocation as it gives a good overview of the boarding school experience.

<http://wfps.k12.mt.us/teachers/carmichaelg/Montana%20Mosaic%20Video%20Link.htm>

Ask students to write up a brief reaction paper to the film and have them hand in at the end of class.

Students will be asked to develop a timeline of boarding schools and also write up a brief description of the boarding school experience. Have them utilize the suggested resources. Students could research a specific boarding school such as Carlisle and write up a summary of the information they found. Use the Essential Questions to help guide the students with their research.

Background Information (prepared by Dulce Whitford, Great Falls Indian Education Coach):

#### The Reservation Boarding School System - Justification and Rationalization:

- To “settle” the land.
- Term “Kill the Indian and save the man”.
- Settlers moved west “Indians remained a problem.”
- Indians had to be moved out of the way.
- Indians must be taught the knowledge, values, and habits of Christian civilization.
- “Social Evolution” of the Indian as a progressive process that could be accelerated by education.
- Education to relieve government of the cost of feeding and clothing Indian people.
- Providing education a tool for economic self-sufficiency.
- In 1890, Congress authorized an annual payment of \$100,000 for the support of industrial and other schools among tribes.
- Run by churches and missionary societies.
- Given all authority by government in 1869 to appoint Indian agents and hire personnel employed on the reservations.
- Attendance at mission schools mandatory by regulation on many reservations for all Native children aged 6-16.
- Day Schools: Children lived in their surroundings, but attend a school nearby.
- Boarding Schools: Children removed from family structure and stayed at school.

#### Boarding School System – Did It Work?

- NO!!
- The system failed.
- The goal was for assimilation.
- Indian culture survived.

Share the following excerpt from *Connecting Cultures and Classrooms* – OPI publication – a copy should be in your school library:

"Students should understand that during this period of history (1870-1900), national attitudes and policies toward Indians largely focused on controlling Indians and forcing them to change. Indians were basically confined to their reservations and forced to adopt totally foreign ways of life – plow farming and ranching being notable examples. Federal Indian agents exerted a great deal of control on reservation lands. These agents were often corrupt, stealing the annuities and commodities that were intended for the Indian communities. This effort was reinforced by various Christian religious denominations who were given exclusive contracts to send missionaries to certain reservations. Missionaries often used assimilation strategies that were demeaning and brutal. Traditional religious practices were outlawed. This period of American history also saw the advent of the boarding school era, a time in which American Indian children were forced to attend schools far from home and family, and where their traditional ways of life were totally banned and severe punishments were exacted for even speaking a tribal language" (page 102).

**Resources:**

*A History and Foundation of American Indian Education Policy* by Stan Juneau. See Chapter Four – Federal Boarding School Era. A copy of this resource should be available in your school library or accessed on-line at <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/IndianEd/Resources/IndPolicyHistory.pdf>

<http://wfps.k12.mt.us/teachers/carmichaelg/Montana%20Mosaic%20Video%20Link.htm>

For more background information on boarding schools use the following resources, these books were sent to your library by The Office of Public Instruction:

*Native America in the Twentieth Century, An Encyclopedia*, edited by Mary B. Davis, Garland Publishing, Inc., 1996 (see pages 646-649).

*Native North American Almanac: A Reference Work of Native North Americans in the United States and Canada, Second Edition*, edited by Duane Champagne, Gale Group, 2001

**Extension activity – have students read and prepare a book report regarding one of the following books about boarding schools:**

*Jim Thorpe: Original All American* by Joseph Bruchac

*Sweet Grass Basket* by Marlene Carvell

*My Name is Seepeetza* by Shirley Sterling